

HOUSE BILL 1234

Updated: March 13, 2012

Critical Teaching Needs Scholarship Program (Hard-to-fill positions)

- Begins in 2013-14 school year
- South Dakota Board of Education to define areas of critical teaching needs based on a survey of every school
- Juniors and seniors in teacher education programs eligible
- Maximum of 100 scholarships per year
- Scholarship amount equal to tuition and fees for 30 credit hours at a South Dakota public postsecondary institution as of July 1, 2013
- Recipient agrees to teach in critical need area in South Dakota for five years

Math and Science Teacher Incentives

- Begins in 2014-15 school year
- Funds to school districts for purpose of attracting/retaining math and science teachers
- \$2,500 bonuses to middle and high school math and science teachers (\$350 to district to cover payroll taxes)
- Teachers with math or science specialist endorsement also eligible, including elementary teachers
- Teacher must receive distinguished or proficient rating on state evaluation system
- Participation for teachers is voluntary

Top Teacher Reward Program

- Begins in 2014-15
- Districts have three options:
 - Create **local** teacher reward program that gives bonuses to teachers based on student achievement, teacher leadership or district's high-needs teaching areas
 - Participation for teachers is voluntary
 - Schools get approximately \$1,000 per teacher for their program
 - Give \$5,000 bonuses to top 20 percent of teachers (\$700 to district to cover payroll taxes)
 - Teacher must receive distinguished rating on state evaluation system
 - Participation for teachers is voluntary
 - Opt out of the bonus money completely (dollars redistributed to participating districts)

Common Evaluation System

- Allows for development of common teacher and principal evaluation system across state

Continuing Contract (teacher "tenure")

- State mandate for continuing contract eliminated in 2016; local districts may continue to offer if they choose
- No teacher who has continuing contract prior to July 1, 2016, loses it; however, two years of "unsatisfactory" evaluations is added as grounds for non-renewal

WHAT CHANGES WERE MADE?

The Legislature made a number of amendments to the original HB 1234, which added more local control and more educator input.

- Local districts now have the option to create a local teacher rewards plan and distribute funds to teachers based on local decisions (amended in House Education).
- Local districts now have the option to opt out of the bonuses entirely (amended in House Education).
- Local districts can create a rewards plan based on local market needs (i.e., hard-to-fill positions), not just science and math (clarified in Senate Education).
- Education stakeholders, not the secretary of education, will have final decision making on approval of local teacher reward plans (amended in Senate Education).
- Local teacher rewards plan may include “teacher leadership” as a criterion for receiving a bonus (amended in Senate Education).
- A group of teachers, principals, superintendents and other key stakeholders will advise on the implementation of this act. This group is in addition to the other work groups and oversight boards already outlined in the bill (amended on Senate floor).